/637 cont./

3. The Ideal Marriage Partner

581 Not a single essay by European travelers suggests that the young Fuegians who are in love have a mental picture of an ideal partner, created by their wishes and transfigured by their romantic fancy. The young person eager to marry does not throw himself into the arms of any partner; freedom in the selection of a mate definitely shows that everyone is calculating and deliberate in choosing this or that person. This shows that all amorous desire moves in certain directions, the goal of which is the lovely vision of the ideal marriage partner. This picture is clearly drawn by certain suggestions in the teachings of the youth initiation. Here all the personal merits and social virtues that each boy and girl must exhibit in married life are emphatically named and recommended. Anyone who will make a list of the individual words that apply to this will get a complete picture of the ideal husband and the ideal wife, according to Yamana conceptions. We need only add to this the wishes for certain physical qualities which the other partner cherishes. In the case of most lovers, these are in the foreground, rather than good character traits.

581 First, the question of how the girl imagines the boy of her
824 dreams. He must be strong and healthy, well built and nicely
[53] proportioned. Deformities that disfigure him, such as scars of burns or other scars and injuries, for example, broken limbs which impede free movement, make a young man less or not at all desirable (10). In former times, apparently, there were no

10. Bove (e):158 agrees: "A cripple, one who is rachitic, can cheerfully take the vow of celibacy, and women regard such a person as an unclean creature, a pariah." In Wieghardt:41 we read the same words.

obese and heavy figures among young people. On the other hand, a well-built, upright, lithe, and supple figure has the best prospects.

581 Moreover, a young man's whole appearance must definitely

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581 marital union with a suitable lifelong companion. If a child hesitates for an unduly long time, the Yamana regard it as an impropriety on the part of the parents.

587 The reasons for an early marriage of young people are also of
589 paramount importance for widowed persons. The duty of a widow to marry has arisen chiefly out of solicitude for her children. Hence "as soon as a man dies, his wives are married to others" /cited in English/ (Bridges /692/ in MM:III, 117;1869). As a result, "There are very few single women, not one among a hundred" /cited in English/ (ibid.) (105). Extraordinary reasons prevent a new marriage.

105. With this statement Bridges (a):203 to a certain extent corrects an earlier assertion: "Owing to the almost general practice of polygamy, many men are without wives, and live so all their days. And owing to the general practice of giving young women to oldish men, the young men frequently can get no wives but relicts" /cited in English/.

589 Modern times have changed a great deal of this, for they have,
178 in part, considerably altered even the conditions of life. On February 2, 1878, Bridges (i):17 reported from Yendegaia: "Widows did not long continue so; in fact, a single adult man or woman was a rarity. But with the march of civilized life marriage becomes less necessary and more difficult, and the number of single men and women increases" /cited in English/. At present, there are so few Yamana living that everyone is married; sometimes there is even a young man with an aged wife, because he has no other choice. Only old Flora has been alone for a long time; she is regarded as hard to get along with.

732 A factually insignificant supplementary statement from Bridges
589 (i):21 is added here: "Though deaf or dumb men never married, unless it were an old woman, a deaf woman would be a wife and have children -- the men remained single because usually no woman would marry such" /cited in English/.

589 What has been said about young persons and those of middle age
887 does not apply to old people. Since they no longer have their

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845 The Yamana say that the reason for the rare cases of premature births is great carelessness on the part of the pregnant woman in running and working or a heavy blow and shock /710/ in falling. We have already mentioned on page 491 when and how voluntary abortion is
847 practiced. A defective baby is immediately destroyed by the mother (133). A crippled child, unfit for life, who is born alive is
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133. The following description by Bridges (i):21 fits here: "Unnatural births were always destroyed and wisely so. For unimportant defects, or such as proved themselves afterwards as for instance deafness, no one was destroyed but only for enormities" /cited in English/.

not killed, but they consciously devote less attention to caring for him, hoping that he will soon die. Such an unfortunate creature is not directly exposed to danger or hunger, but inconspicuously and purposely neglected.

846 Without exception the Fuegian women who have been confined permit themselves only a short rest, one day at the most (134).

134. Hahn (a):807 confirms that the young mother "resumes her work the same day" /translated from French/. It is well known that the Selk'nam women are also capable of this (Vol. I, 366).

They feel no need for it, and furthermore they are told that they
844 should move about and be active as soon as possible. Since giving birth does not cause Indian women any difficulties, it occasionally happens that a woman in an advanced state of pregnancy has her child while at work. For example, she might go into a nearby thicket to gather wood and reappear in her hut after about three hours displaying her newborn baby. Only a few years ago in Puerto Harbertón an Indian woman went into the large woodshed of the farm there. After a good two hours she returned to her family, holding a bundle of wood in one arm and, in the other, the child

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888 widower he lives entirely under the charge of his eldest son"
737 /cited in English/ (444). Naturally some children are more tender

> 444. This hardly agrees, however, with what he (a):206 adds soon after: "The aged are often much neglected, yea, cruelly treated, and I have heard of cases where by their own children they have been killed, to get rid of the trouble of keeping them" /cited in English/. A person who is displeased with the treatment he receives from his own children easily finds refuge with relatives and friends.

and loving toward their aged parents than others. A person who no longer has any children of his own joins a related family or friends. This much is certain, no one is abandoned because of his infirmities. I personally repeatedly witnessed the willing care given even those persons whose lot in old age was a long, burdensome invalidism.

758 The nearest relatives and all the neighbors no less attentively care for a sick person. There are no medicines in Tierra del Fuego. They keep the sick person company and never leave him in some place all by himself. Hyades (d):307 and (p):331 repeatedly asserts: "The sick are not abandoned, and the feeble are helped" /translated from French/. Bridges (h):209 agrees: "The infirm are well cared for, especially by the women" /translated from Spanish/, and elsewhere (i):14 he says even more explicitly: "Great consideration was shown to the sick, they were well attended and as far as possible their wishes were fulfilled. The nursing chiefly fell to the lot of the women" /cited in English/. BD:427 even gives the special expression, tauuxdiitu, "to often visit as a man his sick friend" /cited in English/. If their own child is seriously ill, the helpless parents are in actual despair; adults, too, are deeply affected by the physical suffering of one of their loved ones.
•732 For decades old Whaits has been totally blind. It is touching to see the help and attention which his own daughters bestow on him, as do old and young in the neighborhood. Everyone is concerned about him, and one competes with another in loving service for him. It

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732 was really superfluous to teach us uśwʼala in the čiéxaus how we were to take care of him.

736 597 Elsewhere (p. 514) the concern of the public for orphans has been described in detail. The orphaned boy, wéʼiakiya, as well as the orphaned girl, wéʼiakiyakipa, remains with the surviving parent until the latter marries again. Bridges (a):202, 183 correctly asserts: "If the father of a woman is dead, the mother has the right of disposal...If the mother dies, the little one soon finds a foster-mother, by whom considerable affection is shown" /cited in English/. The nearest relatives, too, in particular the so-called adoptive mother, adakutáruwaxipa, keep an eye on the orphans. If a nursing infant loses its mother, it is reared by another woman who gladly undertakes this service (445). Thus there is not the

445. The Yamana women, as Hahn (a):806 reports, "often rear foster children who do not belong to them, but the child is then regarded as their own and owes them the obedience and respect of an actual child" /translated from French/.

slightest doubt about the rearing of every orphan, which is assured.

801 /1029/ It is probably unnecessary to refute once more, as a figment of the imagination, the opinion circulated by Darwin in his day about the fate of old women. Bridges (k):235 undertook to do this decades ago: "The tales that have been spread about their killing old women who were unable to work are pure fables. These old women had as much security as other individuals as the tribe, for they had children and grandchildren who certainly would have defended them against any assault" /translated from Spanish/. Hyades (g):35 has made clear how valuable they can still be to the entire tribe: "The old women are by no means as useless as [Darwin's] story presupposes; their experience makes them decidedly valuable in securing food, as well as in the other household tasks, and it is not at all rare that young people prefer to marry an experienced older woman rather than a young girl, even though she is prettier. Older women whose husbands are dead very definitely exercise all the rights of a family head; even when they